

REMARKS

Prior to directly providing a reply to the subject Office Action, applicants would like to clarify a simple issue regarding the instant application. In particular, it is noted that a sleeveless bushing is one that eliminates the outer metal sleeve. With respect to the inner metal component, in a sleeveless bushing, that component is not restricted to being a sleeve. For example, as indicated in the instant patent application, a pin can be used.

Turning now to the subject Office Action, claims 1-7 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Reed (Great Britain Patent No. 732, 436). By the present reply, applicants have amended claim 1 in order to further clarify the present invention. In addition, applicants have added claims 22-31 and note that claims 8-21 were withdrawn from consideration.

While it is believed that Reed does not teach the subject invention for other reasons as well, applicants have amended claim 1 and indicated that the inner metal component receiving bore of the elastomeric portion of the sleeveless bushing has a generally uniform diameter throughout its length. Further, applicants have indicated that the inner metal component has at least a portion thereof received within the bore, which portion has a generally uniform diameter corresponding to the generally uniform diameter of the bore.

Clearly, Reed does not teach or suggest these features. In particular, as illustrated in Fig. 6b of the Reed patent, the inner metal component shown therein does not maintain a generally uniform diameter. Likewise, the inner metal component receiving bore does not maintain a generally uniform diameter.

For least these reasons, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 under 35 USC 102(b).

New independent claim 22 corresponds to a combination of the subject matter of prior independent claim 1 and prior dependent claim 5. New claims 23-27 are dependent upon new independent claim 22.

It is respectfully submitted that Reed does not teach or suggest use of a sleeveless bushing having a pin surrounded by its elastomeric portion. In fact, Reed notably teaches away from such subject matter, indicating that inner element 11 is expanded by inserting a hollow mandrel within it. (See page 3, lines 54-89). It would be impossible to insert a hollow mandrel within a pin surrounded by an elastomer. For at least these reasons, applicants respectfully request an indication of allowability of claims 22-26.

New independent claim 27 corresponds to the subject matter of prior independent claim 1 and prior dependent claim 7. New claims 28-31 are dependent upon new independent claim 27.

It is respectfully submitted that Reed does not teach or suggest that the groove portion of the suspension component extends only along a portion of the circumferential length of the inner diameter of the bushing receiving bore of that component. For at least these reasons, applicants respectfully request an indication of allowability of new claims 27-31.

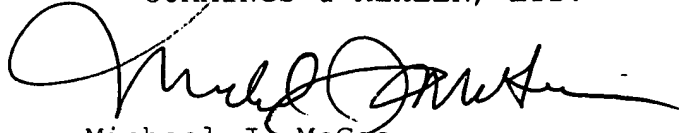
In view of the foregoing, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC 102(b). Additionally, applicants respectfully request a notice of allowance of claims 1-7 and 22-31 of the instant application. Early and favorable action is hereby solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. McGee", written over a dotted line.

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